

Indefinite Pronouns as Subjects

Teaching

An **indefinite pronoun** does not refer to a definite, or specific, person, place, thing, or idea.

When used as subjects, some indefinite pronouns are always singular. Others are always plural. Others can be singular or plural depending on how they are used.

Indefinite Pronouns

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------|----------|-----------|------------|----------|-----------|
| Always Singular | another | each | everything | nothing | something |
| | anybody | either | neither | one | |
| | anyone | everybody | nobody | somebody | |
| | anything | everyone | no one | someone | |
| Always Plural | both | few | many | several | |
| Singular or Plural | all | any | most | none | some |

Singular indefinite pronouns take singular verbs.

Each of the phones was ringing.

Plural indefinite pronouns take plural verbs.

A few of the calls were wrong numbers.

All, any, most, none, and some can be singular or plural. If the pronoun refers to a single person or thing, it takes a singular verb. If it refers to more than one person or thing, it takes a plural verb.

Most of these **dates** are correct. (The *dates* are considered as individuals.)

Most of the **information** is correct. (*Information* is considered as one quantity.)

Making Indefinite Pronouns and Verbs Agree

In each item, underline the indefinite pronoun used as the subject. If the pronoun changes number according to the noun it refers to, also underline that noun. Then find the verb. If the verb agrees with the subject, write **Correct**. If not, write the correct verb form.

EXAMPLE None of the callers was ready to sign up. *were*

- None of the students is absent. _____
- Each of the parents send care packages during the two weeks. _____
- Nobody is going into the water in this high wind. _____
- Some of the milk have turned sour. _____
- Both of the twins go to summer camp. _____
- Everyone wants to be a winner. _____
- Most of the team members get a team picture. _____
- Someone were supposed to bring the net. _____
- Several of the girls has made the all-star team. _____
- Most of the children has brought lunches. _____

**Lesson
4**

Indefinite Pronouns as Subjects

More Practice

A. Making Verbs Agree with Indefinite Pronoun Subjects

In each sentence, underline the indefinite pronoun used as subject. If the pronoun changes number according to the noun it refers to, underline that noun. Then find the verb. If the verb agrees with the subject, write **Correct**. If not, write the correct verb form.

1. Several of the campers has arrived early. _____
2. Most of the neighbors was away on vacation. _____
3. Someone are dropping off campers in the parking lot now. _____
4. Somebody was trying to leave a message. _____
5. Was any of Brianna's classmates going to camp? _____
6. One of the girls have become ill. _____
7. Nobody like to be left out. _____
8. A few of the counselors has brought snacks. _____
9. Both of my best friends were unable to attend. _____
10. Several of Josh's friends is enrolled in computer camps. _____

B. Using Verbs with Indefinite Pronoun Subjects

Write each numbered sentence on the appropriate line, using the correct present tense form of the verb.

(1) Most of this troop's members (want) to become Eagle Scouts in a few years. (2) Some of the boys (plan) ahead. For example, Jacob keeps track of all the badges he needs to earn. (3) Some of the work he does for his badges (be) helpful in his studies. (4) All of his free time (be) devoted to his service project. (5) None of his relatives (have) ever become Eagle Scouts.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Indefinite Pronouns as Subjects*Application***A. Checking Agreement of Verbs with Indefinite-Pronoun Subjects**

Proofread this paragraph for errors in subject-verb agreement. Underline any verb that does not agree with the indefinite pronoun used as its subject. On the lines below, write the number of each sentence that has an error and rewrite the sentence correctly.

Jonathan's main summer activity is soccer camp. **(1)** Most of the boys and girls of Jonathan's age is in the advanced group. **(2)** Some of the motivation for the boys is to be better than the girls. **(3)** In fact, one of the girls are better than all of the boys. **(4)** Everybody play 20 minutes of every 40-minute game. **(5)** Several of the camp participants disagree with this policy. **(6)** However, none of the responses from the coaches suggest the policy will change.

B. Using Verbs Correctly with Indefinite Pronouns as Subjects

In each sentence beginning below, underline the word that should be used as the simple subject in a sentence. Then supply a complete predicate, including a present-tense verb of your choice. Make sure your verb agrees with the underlined subject.

EXAMPLE Some of the certificates *have not been signed*.

1. Most of the day
2. All of the soccer players
3. None of the pizza
4. Both of the goalies
5. Everyone in the stands
6. One of the coaches
7. Each of the parents
8. Most of the ceremony